

INTRODUCTION TO ANESTHESIA—The Principles of Safe Practice—Second Edition—Robert D. Dripps, M.D., Professor and Chairman, Department of Anesthesiology, and James E. Eckenhoff, M.D., Professor of Anesthesiology, University of Pennsylvania Schools of Medicine; and Leroy D. Vandam, M.D., Clinical Professor of Anesthesia, Harvard Medical College. Line Drawings by Leroy D. Vandam, M.D. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1961. 413 pages, \$8.00.

The original edition has been expanded and rewritten. New subjects have been added, including techniques of inhalation anesthesia, carbon dioxide absorption, the physiological effects of hypercarbia, special procedures such as hypothermia, hypnosis and deliberate hypotension, intravenous technique and therapy, respiratory resuscitation, pulmonary function, mechanical ventilation and medicine and the law.

In general the book is divided into seven main topics which consist of: (1) The preanesthetic period, (2) The day of anesthesia, (3) During operation, (4) The post-operative period, (5) Resuscitation (cardiac and respiratory), (6) The anesthetist as a consultant, (7) Special topics. Under these main topics most of the problems encountered by an anesthesiologist from his first interview with the patient and his evaluation of the risk and selection of the type of anesthetic indicated, through the actual administration and the postoperative recovery period are discussed in a lucid, concise manner. The techniques and methods described are those that have worked best for the authors and should be studied and evaluated by all students and practicing anesthesiologists.

CHARLES F. McCUSKEY, M.D.

* * *

DISTURBANCES OF HEART RATE, RHYTHM AND CONDUCTION—Eliot Corday, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.C.C., Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles; Attending Staff, Cedars of Lebanon and Mt. Sinai Hospitals, Los Angeles; and David W. Irving, M.D., Clinical Assistant, School of Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles; Research Associate, Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, Los Angeles; Research Fellow, Los Angeles County Heart Association. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1961. 357 pages, \$8.50.

This monograph is a relatively simplified version of the cardiac arrhythmias intended for medical students and clinicians. The authors include much of their previously published work relating the decrease in cardiac output and blood flow to the brain and to the kidney following experimentally produced arrhythmias. In addition, a number of new drawings have been prepared to explain their concept of the relationship between the mechanical and electrical events occurring during arrhythmia. Two hundred twenty-three figures and 467 references indicate the scope of the coverage.

The contents of the book are fairly conventional with the exception of two chapters, one on cardiac arrest and one on hemodynamic disturbances resulting from cardiac arrhythmias. In addition, there is a chapter consisting of only 30 pages covering all of the drugs used in the treatment of the arrhythmias. This last section permits only brief coverage of each of the important drugs, and only in a broad, general way are problems with the drugs discussed. One would have thought that in a text of this sort considerable discussion of the many difficulties presented by the use of such drugs as digitalis and quinidine would be clearly and adequately presented. The one of differentiation, for example, of the arrhythmias due to digitalis toxicity from the arrhythmias due to the underlying disease in patients who have received some digitalis, is a major problem confronting the clinician. The discussion of quinidine is incomplete, and the speed of administration recommended

for intravenous quinidine on page 298 is probably excessive. The authors recommend 2 to 5 cc. of diluted quinidine per minute, whereas in our experience 1 to 2 cc. per minute is much safer. Furthermore, a misleading statement is made on page 263, where the authors advise quinidine gluconate be given very slowly intravenously in a dose of 0.65 gm. This is a very large dose if, by "very slowly" the reader interprets that quinidine should be given by injection over a 5- to 10-minute period. It should be stated that this should be given by infusion over the course of perhaps an hour. The authors recommend discontinuing quinidine several weeks after sinus rhythm is resumed in a patient with atrial fibrillation. This is true in a few cases in which the cause of the atrial fibrillation has been eliminated, but will result in recurrence of the fibrillation in most other patients. Continued maintenance dosage, therefore, is necessary in most patients.

By and large, the clinical discussions are sound, with only the variations in opinion that are inevitable in a discussion of such a difficult and controversial subject as the arrhythmias.

One would have hoped in a text which emphasized the pathophysiological changes of the arrhythmias to have seen a discussion of the new work on the electrical activity of single cardiac fibers and their changes with the cardiac drugs that influence the arrhythmias and help explain the mechanism underlying disturbances in rhythm. This work, correlated with changes in ionic flux of sodium and potassium, has greatly enlarged our understanding of the action of cardiac drugs and would be very helpful in a new book.

In general, the book can be recommended as a sound, uncomplicated account of the present status of our clinical knowledge of the arrhythmias which should be of considerable help to the practicing physician. It should serve as a ready reference to problems in the field, and the extensive bibliography will be helpful for those who wish to delve deeper. A point of interest with respect to the bibliography is the fact that the original references of the pioneers in the field are given, for which serious students will be most grateful.

MAURICE SOKOLOW, M.D.

* * *

THE DOCTOR BUSINESS—Revised Edition—Richard Carter. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 575 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York, 1961. Dolphin Books, Paperback, 276 pages, 95 cents.

The revised edition of this book differs little from the earlier one. A few new aspects have been added.

It is a compendium of substantially all the vicious attacks which have been made upon the American Medical Association by anyone. The author presents them as if they were objective reporting of actual facts.

At the outset he uses an example which he admits to be exaggerated but then proceeds to belabor the American system of medicine on this basis. The prejudice of the author is obvious throughout.

Although he is a newspaper man, he poses as an expert in medicine and economics and uses false statements, distortions, half truths, quotations out of context, and misrepresentations to bolster his point of view. The reviewer has intimate knowledge of many of the matters dealt with in this book and is therefore in a position to recognize the false nature of the presentation as a whole. Occasionally, a transparent gesture is made in an effort to convince the reader of the objectivity of the statements made.

It is obvious the author desires to change the whole pattern of medicine in this country. The book has no value except to alert the medical profession to the variety of attacks it can expect from socializers, left wingers and irresponsible authors.